

# GILLESPIE MUSEUM OF MINIERALS STETSON UNIVERSITY MOVEMBER 14 THE 1938

CELEBRATING

60 YEARS of

EARTH SCIENCE

EDUCATION

Fall 2018

www.stetson.edu/gillespie



#### Thomas Byrd Gillespie (1885-1985)

Writing to mineral consultant
Arthur Montgomery in 1960, Mr.
Gillespie explained that the couple
collected "always with the idea of
ultimately giving the collection to
some Florida institution, who might
preserve it for posterity, placing it
on display for the benefit of
everyone."



#### Nellie Larson Gillespie (1885-1964)

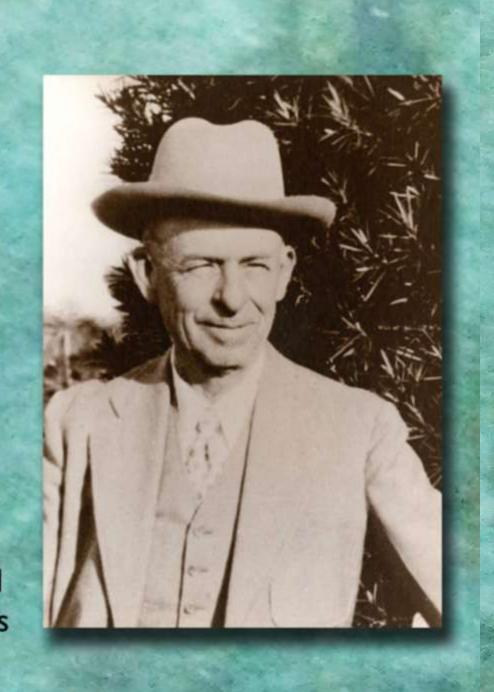
The work of Mrs. Gillespie—careful record-keeping—assured the significance of this historic collection. With the twelve journals she kept on acquisitions and the files of over 1,000 letters and invoices, Stetson University has a rare treasure in both the collection and its archives.





# T.B. Gillespie Paving Company, Palatka, Florida

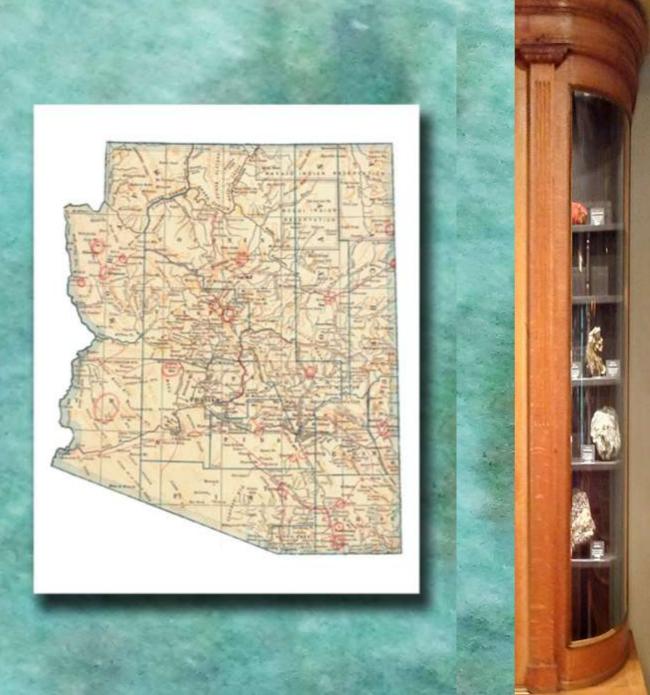
Engineering records and newspaper accounts reflect Mr. Gillespie's success. In 1911 his Birmingham, Alabama, firm received a paving contract for the City of Gadsden; in 1918 he was the Superintendent for an experimental asphalt project in Charlotte, North Carolina; and by 1922 he had received a bid to pave streets in Palatka with brick.





#### **Arizona Atlas**

Bisbee, Canyon Diablo, Christmas, Copper Queen, Mammoth District, Mule Mountains, Red Cloud. In their travels and through their contacts, the Gillespies acquired specimens from all of the best known mines and districts through the US, Canada, and Mexico. Most of these legendary Arizona locations have been closed or privatized since their collecting days in the 1920s, 30s, and 40s.





## Building a Significant Collection

Well-known mineralogist Arthur Montgomery consulted the Gillespies, and offered first rights to many of his best pieces. In a 1940 letter, he encourages the purchase of a "perfectly magnificent specimen, a thick slab of crystallized and brilliantly gleaming white calcite with... a sprinkling of unbelievably orange-yellow wulfenite. For color it is one of the finest things I've ever seen."

277 Park Ave., New York, W. Y.

Dec. 1, 1940

Dear Mrs. Gillespie:

Thanks so very much for your latter and the check for \$35.50. I'm very glad that you and Mr. Gillespie liked the mocamatones. As I promised, if anything finer comes out during Over's present work, I'll see that you hear about it and get a chance to exchange what you now have for it, if you so wished. Over writes that he is not doing very well and that the prospects look poor for really line gen material; which indicates that the hamiful of really outstanding cabochous, among them yours, that were cut, are absolutely unique.

It is very sind of you to say you think you cee as for some of the speciacits brought down to Florids last year, but I can assure you that this is not so. I'll check definitely on the books when I get home, but I'm quite certain that everything was definitely settled for. There were a couple of small gifts which you may have remembered as being charged for, such as the sontgowergite. You sirestly thankes se for these, both you and Mr. Gilmanie, although they secured to practically nothing. You have both been so kind to Over and me in your generous purchases, that I wish I could do a lot more to decrease the indebtedness on our side.

as soon as I return to S. T., I'll send you a list, with full descriptions, of the specimens reserved for you and the prices. It is very likely that you may want to change your mind about some of them, even before you see them. Is I recall, the one really important and outstanding specimen as that best yellow sulfenite. I have an idea that I quoted \$50. on this, unless it was \$75. I meant to tell you and Er. Gillesole show I saw you that there is a chance I can get you a still finer yellow sulfenite of this find of Over's, the second-best specimen was taken by the Es. Buseum among the first few sold, at a price of \$75. So far they have not paid for it, although it is over a year and a half since they took it. Their funds are very low, and they bought a lot of expensive gens at the same time. I have an idea I can persuade them to lat it go, in case you think you would want it. All I can say is that it is perfectly magnificent, a thin slab of crystallized, brilliant and gleaning-white calcite with a sprinkling of unbellewahly-yellow crystals of orange-yellow surfenite. For color it is one of the finest things ever seen, and the No. I appoinen from the find, which went to Earward for \$800. and was a huge specimen, is definitely bothing this one for quality.



#### The Chauvin Touch

From 1958 to 1960 founding director and curator Robert Chauvin and his wife, Della, made regular trips to St. Augustine and back to DeLand, transporting many of the finest specimens from the Gillespies' home to the new museum. Their son, Randy, served as a student staff member while an undergraduate. Mr. Gillespie acquired this rare specimen of quartz on pyrite in his memory.



#### A Thirty-year Partnership

Dean Robert Chauvin (left) and T.B. Gillespie traveled widely throughout North America to add to the collection after it was given to the University. From southeast Canada to the mountain ranges and mining county of the southwestern US, they travelled annually during summer months, usually in a newly purchased station wagon, hauling their finds back to DeLand. Dean Chauvin planned and drove; T.B. funded travel and new acquisitions.





# of Minerals Founded 1958

Opening to visitors in 1960, the museum was originally in the center of campus (in a building which later became the university Print Shop, until 2015). In its early years the museum was closely affiliated with the academic programs of the Department of Geology and Geography.



#### Six Decades of Field Trips

Mrs. Gillespie put the shared vision best: to make their private collection available to students of Florida, a state she described as "scarcely mineralized." In the 1960s and 1970s, when the museum was located near the Carleton Union Building, many of the field trip visitors walked from local schools to examine the collection, most of which was on display in cases purchased by the founders.





# **Founding Curators**

Dean Robert Chauvin (left), who served as the curator of the Gillespie from its beginning (November 1958) through 1975 with Professor Bruce Bradford, who directed and curated from 1975 to 2012. They are shown here with a prized Wulfenite specimen (Prof. Bradford's favorite) soon after the museum re-opened in its current home on the southeast corner of campus.





#### The Gillespie Museum 2.0

In 1982 the collection and cases moved from the center of campus, to its current home at 234 East Michigan. The main exhibit room was filled with most of the original historic collection, a dazzling display of thousands of minerals.



#### The Move to East Michigan

In 1980 President Pope Duncan purchased the Powell-Acree house at 234 East Michigan for the university, and recognized in it an ideal location for the Gillespie Museum of Minerals, which had its beginning in the Palatka, and later the St. Augustine homes of the Gillespies. The move—of 15,000 specimens and 40 display cases—along with some construction delays meant the museum would not re-open until 1982.





#### Field Trips, 1980s

Soon after the museum re-opened in the current location, field trips resumed. A familiar sight during the morning hours of any day in the academic year was a group of students and their science teachers examining the collection with direction from student staff, and in some periods, from museum docents.



#### A Steadfast Friend

For years after the death of Mrs. Gillespie and beyond his collection travel days with Dean Chauvin, T.B. Gillespie remained involved in the museum's development—funding new display cases and new additions to the collection. The university community celebrated his 100th birthday, his last, in this building in 1985.





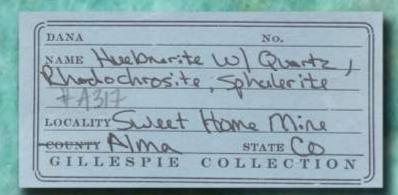
#### The Founding Display Case

Commissioned by the Gillespies in 1937, as they moved to their retirement home in St. Augustine, this oak display case was the focal point of the couple's private museum. It remains so. Refurbished in 2014 by Steve Cunningham (of DeLand), it continues to hold treasured pieces as it informs design choices throughout the museum.



#### **Collection Management**

Depending on how you count, there have been at least six databases for the museum collection, beginning with the alphabetical notebooks kept by Mrs. Gillespie through a current initiative to photograph and digitize the 2500 specimens in the core collection, with volunteer assistance from photographers Ed Dillenbeck and Rodney Neff. The specimen card below was designed and paid for by Mr. Gillespie in the 1960s.





# **Story Hour**

A 1991 Family Day featured the chance for visitors and their families to gather around the iconic wooden bench, then and now a resting place to contemplate the beauties of the collection, or to wait comfortably, patiently for the rockhound in your party.





#### Where It Begins

Field trips in the 1990s included a tour of the minerals, a visit to the Fluorescent Room, and a Mystery Mineral activity on the front porch. On the benches beneath the Founders' Plaque, visitors learn how this significant mineral collection came to the Stetson campus: the Gillespies' passion for collecting + Professor Chauvin's commitment to geology and geography + a sixty-year legacy of community outreach.



#### A Gold Rush

To publicize the 1994 opening of the Mining Exhibit, funded by a Florida Department of Education grant, Mark Twain was invited to read from his stories influenced by the California Gold Rush. This famous quotation is attributed to him: "A gold mine is a hole in the ground and the liar standing next to it."





## The Purple Giant

This amethyst vug (quartzlined cavity in igneous rock) developed in the Serra Geral Formation of Brazil, in the Mesozoic Age; made its way to a mineral shop in Bern, Switzerland, in the early 1980s; and was acquired, through the museum's endowment, in 1998. Then assistant director Holli Vanater oversaw delivery and installation, which involved a forklift, much of the facilities staff, and a removal of the front door from its hinges.





#### Interactive

Before the Volcanism Exhibit or Rock Cycle Table, the Connections Room was always about hands-on. The museum's collection features fine minerals (rarer and often more spectacular). But over time its educational mission expanded to rocks, geodes, petrified wood, and fossils. Even for tech-savvy 21st century students, discovery begins with handling a beautiful stone.



#### Volcanism, (1999)

Museum staff prepare for the opening morning of Volcanism:

Earth's Interior, September 2009.

The mural, interactive display, and rock cabinet was installed with support of a Florida Department of Education Grant of \$25,000. This corner of the Connections Room is a gathering place for discussions of the Rock Cycle during K-5 field trips.





## Science Café, Series I

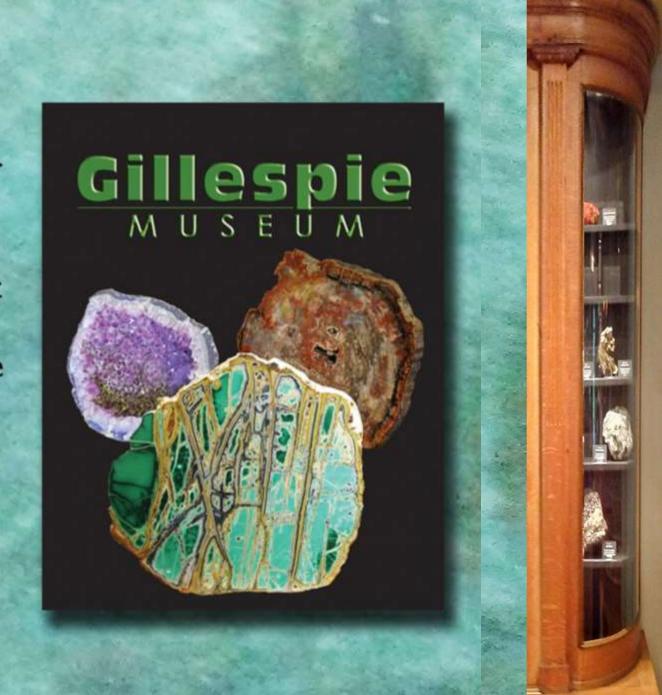
Harry Price, Ph.D., Chemistry, presented on nanotechnology at the first Science Café in the fall of 2009. Faculty colleagues have supported this opportunity to bring their own research and perspectives, or innovations in their fields to our campus and community. We're in our tenth series this year, with a focus in 2018-19 on Florida geology and Florida ecosystems.





# **Foyer Facelift**

In the summer of 2010, in the first in a series of master woodworking projects for the museum, Steve Cunningham of DeLand built and installed this oak reception desk. This was the first background poster for the featured display cabinet, designed by Stacey Junkins, who assisted both the museum and the geology/ environmental department from 2009 through 2013.





#### Florissant Fossil Beds Colorado

On a collecting trip n 2010, Bruce Bradford, curator, and Karen Cole, director, visited the Florissant National Monument, one of the richest and most diverse fossil deposits in the world. Petrified redwood stumps up to 14 feet wide and thousands of detailed fossils of insects and plants reveal the story of a very different, prehistoric Colorado.



#### The Gillespie Annex

In the past twenty years, the renovated garage behind the museum building has been a computer lab for Geography and Environmental Science, a gathering place for Hatter Harvest, a Markers' Space, and, as shown in this photo, a mineral lab for educational programs.





#### The East Gallery

The current Collectors' Room was for decades part display and part storage. No museum can have enough space for either. When this gallery space was re-imagined, 2011-2012, museum displays could make connections to the outdoors, through on-line galleries, a science bench, and, equally important, windows opening onto the Native Florida Landscape.



#### **Rare Sightings**

Under the umbrella of the Florida black bear (Ursus americanus floridanus), museum staffer Stacey Junkins and an ivory-billed woodpecker collaborated on an exhibit in the Florida gallery. The 2011 installation, Wild Life: Saving the Florida Black Bear, opened in partnership with the FL Scenic Byway Commission and the state's Wildlife Commission.





#### The Volusia Sandhill Ecosystem

In summer 2011, the Volusia Sandhill Ecosystem restoration began with the planting of 80 trees — mostly longleaf pines. Roughly two-thirds of the total site has been restored to date, with a pollination garden, several wiregrass areas, and other native sandhill species planted by student volunteers, scout groups, and other community partners. More than a restoration, the ongoing project is also an outdoor classroom and living museum, offering a unique opportunity for education about a rapidly disappearing ecosystem.



#### **Stetson Seed Library**

Inspired in 2012 by a visit to the museum by novelist and environmental activist Janisse Ray, who read from her work The Seed Underground, first-year students in Stetson's Honors Program developed the seed library, which provides visitors the chance to take seeds collected from Hatter Harvest vegetable garden and the Volusia Sandhill Ecosystem.





# Sometimes We Step Over the Line

Not willing to say where science ends and art begins, the Gillespie has a tradition of small environmental art installations. Clay-fired and not-stood in our Florida Gallery and weathered into our landscape in this 2012 installation, Recomposed, by a student artist and Gillespie Museum Guide.

# RECOMPOSED

**ENVIRONMENTAL INSTALLATION** 

by Rachel Mathes





#### **Environmental Art**

Saw palmetto (Serenoa repens)
Spanish moss (Tillandsia usneoides)
2012

One of thirteen installations in the Native Florida Landscape, created by Prof. Gary Bolding's students in the Spring of 2012.



#### **Museum Connections**

To commemorate the centennial of Arizona statehood at the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society's 2012 show, Bruce Bradford and Karen Cole curated Southwest by Southeast, traveling with twelve mineral specimens (including a rare, 49-pound wulfenite) and photos and archival documents. The entry placed second in the small museum category.







## A Passion for Collecting

In 2013, to celebrate the opening of the east gallery and to commemorate the museum's 55th anniversary, this exhibit paid tribute to the Gillespies' founding gift. Summer intern Martha Ball assisted in archival work and mineral display. The geographically arranged case on the south wall continues to demonstrate the breadth of the museum's collection as well as the informed approach of its first benefactors.





#### Founders/Keepers Day

Each November the museum celebrates—sometimes with Guitar on the Rocks, or a round of Happy Birthday from field trippers on the front porch, or a gathering of campus and community members who have kept the museum rocking. In 2013, students from Prof. Matt Roberts' digital arts class created on-line galleries through augmented reality (AR).



#### **Volunteers**

From museum shop inventory to Science Saturday planning, volunteers bring extra hands and new insights to the museum and its programming. Ms. Miriam and Ms. Virginia, as they were known, supported the museum for over 30 years.





# Snakes, Rocks, and Granola Bars

When HATS, Webelos, Girl Scouts, ECHO Rangers visit, we roll out nature's carpet. Reptile and Amphibian Day was one of the first Saturday events in the Rinker **Environmental Learning** Center. Outdoor classroom opportunities—soil profiles, seed collecting, snake handling-make full use of this green corner of campus.





#### Mostly Green Halloween, I

For the last ten years, this fall festival has invited young scientists to study the natural world on the grounds. The first celebration in October 2008 was shaped and supervised by administrative assistant Sandra Dacus, who brought crafts and cupcakes from home.



#### Outdoor Classoom/ Playroom

Dodecahedron Bubble Station

A small grant from the Association of Science and Technology Centers introduced the geometry of soap film during Earth Day 2014. A bit of silicon, a bubble wand, and plenty of room to run around the laboratory.





#### The Teaching Loop

With the addition of walking paths in 2015, the Volusia Sandhill Ecosystem transformed from a longleaf pine micro-restoration to a Teaching Landscape. Undergraduate classes and volunteers help to maintain the landscape, and bring their knowledge and creativity to interpretive signs in the outdoor classroom areas.



#### Resources

Undergraduate interns create programming and carry out other ground work for the Volusia Sandhill Ecosystem. Here interns Alex Krest, Stephanie Hanson, and Jenna Palmisano beta test a flower parts identification activity in front of a mural created by intern Sam McPherson for Earth Day 2018.





# Millions of Years of Geological History

Fall 2017 Florida Formations opened, with research and design by Wendy Tanner, anthropologist, archaeologist and graphic designer. This installation covers the last 500 million years of Florida geology, and expanded the museum holdings of Florida specimens by 50%.





#### Mineral Lab with a Geologist

**During Science Saturdays visiting** 

scholars have the opportunity to study with university faculty and their undergraduates.
Environmental geologist Ben Tanner, Ph.D. leads a lab on mineral identification through physical properties.



#### The Fossil Hunters!

Coming spring 2019—two amazing opportunities to explore Florida fossil hunting with the cast of the Fossil Hunters television series.

Science Café on February 7, and Science Saturday on February 9.

Zach Zacharias, Trish Dudiak, Don Brunning, John Sacha, April Brunning, Dave Dudiak, and Allison Zacharias (left to right).





## Florida Calcite

We open a new exhibit on January 31, 2019, featuring the collections of two geologists with the Florida Geological Survey, who have been collecting calcite for the last forty years.

An exhibit and Science Café.

